

Head Start

Summer 2020 issue

Crossways Community is a Christian charity based in Tunbridge Wells providing residential care and support for adults with acute mental health issues.

Crossways Community merger with Mental Health Residential

As many of you will know Crossways has been working closely for a few years with another local mental health charity, Mental Health Residential Limited. I am delighted to say that the two organisations have now legally merged. The new organisation, called Crossways Community, is now the largest independent mental health charity in West Kent. MHR, like Crossways, is a well-established charity with an excellent track record of serving its residents and prides itself on its strong roots in the local community.

As a merged charity our main focus remains on providing high quality and supportive residential accommodation for adults with moderate to severe mental health problems. I am delighted to welcome the staff and residents

of MHR to Crossways. Their skills, reputation and ambition complement ours and their work at the homes in Southborough is extremely well regarded by residents, families and stakeholders. Together we are now able to offer over sixty units of accommodation ranging from independent living flats to homes with twenty four hour care. Crossways Community will be more financially resilient and therefore able to help more of those in our community with poor mental health. We will also be able to offer wider career opportunities for our staff.

West Kent, where we work, is one of the most affluent areas in Kent and so it can be easy to overlook areas that are marginalised or relatively deprived.

But there are high levels locally of health inequalities, depression and anxiety due to stigma, discrimination and poor mental health. At Crossways we strive to be part of the solution to the huge problem of mental health in our community. At this time of pandemic and lockdown we are particularly aware that many people are suffering poorer mental health and so we will be playing our part in helping our community work through these issues.

Chris Munday

During lockdown residents at Moxham House made a spectacular banner to express their thanks to the NHS and care workers.



Mental Health Resources at the Kitchen Table

The Kitchen Table café has obviously been closed during lockdown but for the time being it has been repurposed to create a venue for our friends at Mental Health Resource (aka The Hub). Screens have been put up so that it can be used for some much needed one to one counselling sessions, so it is still “a good place to chat”. We are following government guidelines and looking forward to re-opening when we can provide a safe and comfortable environment to welcome back all our customers.



Meet some of the staff team

Kai Amos



September 2019.
At 71 London Road
I have been working
since May 2020.

What does your role involve?

At The Kitchen Table I have been working as a Café Assistant and at 71 London Road as a House Support Worker.

What do you like about working for Crossways?

I appreciate Crossway's ability to create a sense of community and belonging not only

How long have you worked at Crossways?
I started volunteering for The Kitchen Table in February/ March 2019 and working there in

for people experiencing mental health issues, but also for its employees.

When you are not working at Crossways, how do you like to spend your time?

Above all I love spending time with my children and pets and other than them I like to read about politics, social justice etc. and like to go to museums, art exhibitions and the seaside.

Erin Mansfield

How long have you worked at Crossways?

I joined Crossways in November 2019, so I have worked here for 9 months.

What does your role involve?

My role is based at Moxham House and I am the cleaner. I am in charge of the housekeeping and, during the current pandemic, infection control too. I also make a pukka cuppa!

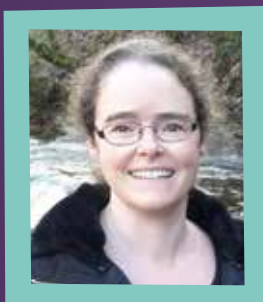
What do you like about working for Crossways?

I enjoy working at Crossways because it is a community. The team are all fantastic and Moxham House has a wonderful, fun atmosphere.

When you are not at Crossways, how do you like to spend your time?

Outside of Crossways, I am a professional musician and dance tutor. I spend a lot of my time travelling around the UK and performing!

Amanda Poulson



My name is Amanda. I started working as the office administrator for Crossways at 71 London Road (formally MHR) in late November last year. My background was originally in IT until I had my children (now aged 10, 14 and 16)

when I decided to take a break from work. Once all of them were in school, I followed a role within the community by volunteering for a number of years. This progressed to employment within the charity sector and eventually led me to Crossways and the amazing work that they do.

When I am not working my boys keep me busy running from one club to another most evenings and weekends. I am involved in helping at the local youth football club and spend many a weekend standing in all weathers supporting my boys and their teams. I also enjoy baking for friends and family

and I am part of a team that bakes birthday cakes for a local charity.

I have been made to feel very welcome since joining Crossways and despite the unusual recent circumstances of working from home, I look forward to being back with the team soon.

Conti Barnard

I started working at Crossways at the beginning of November 2019. My role is to support Penny, the Manager at Moxham, and Ginny, the Manager at Culverdale in an admin capacity.

I particularly enjoy the variety of the role, getting things organised and making life a little easier for the Managers and team.

Since starting here, I have learnt so much

about mental health, the various illnesses and also about how the team provide such excellent support in so many aspects of the lives of the residents.

I have decided to learn as much as I can and have started a Mental Health Awareness qualification,

as well as a Mental Health First Aid course.

When I'm not working, I enjoy playing the bass guitar, taking my golden retriever Buddy for long walks, playing board games and watching movies.





Sofa Yoga



Garden party with BBQ to celebrate VE day

Grace Kuhepa

*Registered Manager of
71 London Road*



*How long have you been at
71 London Road?*

Four years, one of which has been as manager. I've never worked so hard or been so happy at work. It's a real privilege to be part of that household.

Tell us about your home life?

I live with my husband and two very busy teenage daughters. My home life normally revolves around the girls' social and activities calendars, so lock-down brought a bit of welcome respite!

What are your interests?

I enjoy keeping chickens. I love art and would spend more time in galleries if I could. I struggle with a lot of religion but God is a big interest and source of comfort and direction.

How do you spend your spare time?

I have done a lot of camping. It has often been a financial decision but some of the best moments of my life have spent experiencing the outdoors that way.

What do you wish you had more time to do?

Read more books and articles of my choice. The list of items in my online library starts with the "Heatwave plan for England", I would like it to be something very different.

What would you change about yourself?

Many things but one would be to appreciate music more. I played musical instruments as a young person and enjoy various genres but I know that I do not experience music the way some do. I feel I'm missing out and wish I could change that.

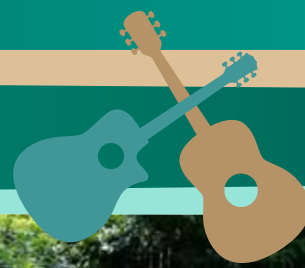
What makes you happy?

Many things but curry is up there.



The staff team at 71LR, left to right: Amanda, Rachel, Adam, Helena, Kai, Paul, Grace and Tiffany

Guitar playing at Culverdale



We meet every Thursday and learn a piece of music together in the garden which adds a nice environment to play in. The piece we are attempting to master at the moment is The Opening by Phillip Glass. This is particularly challenging because it requires two instruments playing simultaneously in a polyrhythm which means two rhythms laid over each other interlacing and creating a unique sound. We have managed to get a few pieces of music under our belts and when we feel confident about it we have been known to play to the residents and staff. Other residents can join in but they tend to need a separate group as everyone is at a different level of ability and may need some coaching to bring them up to speed.



James and Alex



All the homes at Crossways have been closed to visitors during lockdown but there has been plenty of activity with residents and staff being very creative in finding new forms of support and entertainment.

Left to right: Cathy, Michelle, Henry, Erin, Vittoria and Valeria.

Maynard ran a couple of quiz evenings for staff which were hard fought and very popular.



It has been business as usual for the Admin team though everyone has been working remotely with staff meetings, chapel, recruiting etc conducted via Zoom.

A poster to say a big Thank You to the tennis club who gave a generous donation of food.





Tammy James

HR Officer at Crossways

How long have you been at Crossways?

I joined Crossways in September 2019, so am coming up to my one year anniversary.

The time has flown by and it's been great to get to know so many people and develop a proper understanding of the excellent work Crossways does.

Tell us about your background?

I was born and raised in Sydney and moved to the UK in 2001 for a working holiday and stayed! I met and married Alex and we moved to Athens with his work and spent 10 years there. We moved to Tunbridge Wells in 2017, have two children at primary school and a black labrador called Hoovie.

What do you do in your spare time?

I spent alot of my spare time ferrying the children to sport,

activities and birthday parties and when I am not doing that, I love open water swimming, playing tennis and always enjoy the winning combination of a long dog walk and a great pub lunch with friends and family. We are members of St John's in Tunbridge Wells so enjoy our Sunday mornings there.

How has working during lock-down been for you?

It's been business as usual for my work at Crossways, just from home instead of the admin building. I've missed face to face communication and being able to have a chat while the kettle boils or ducking into the Houses at London Road, Culverdale and Moxham, but Zoom meetings

and conversations have helped me stay connected. Thank God for the technology!

What challenges have you faced during the pandemic?

Juggling my job and home schooling the children has been a massive challenge for my family. I am really looking forward to the children returning to school in September!

What do you wish you had more time to do?

Sleep! I love it and am really good at it given the chance.

What makes you happy?

Hugs, sunshine, blue sky and the best Australian biscuits ever - Tim tams!

The skilled staff team at Crossways Community is expanding and we now have over 60 people working in various roles across the organisation. We have recently welcomed support workers Zita O'Reilly and Kristian Hammond at Moxham House, Jonathan Daniell at Culverdale and Adam Savidge is a newcomer to 71 London Road. All new support workers follow mandatory training and there is an extensive programme of training which is continually being undertaken by all staff, with some gaining formal qualifications.

As well as opportunities for employment at Crossways, we also offer various opportunities to volunteer, including as a trustee. If you are interested in getting involved in any capacity then please contact julia.kirk@crosswayscommunity.org.uk



Zita O'Reilly



Kristian Hammond



Jonathan Daniell



Adam Savidge

Supporting the work of Crossways Community

Crossways Community is very dependent on the support of our friends. We greatly appreciate the help that many people give us in our work with people with mental health difficulties. If you feel you can help us or continue to help us in prayer, practically, financially or with your time, please indicate this below. All help, however large or small, is valued.

Title _____ Name _____

Address _____ Postcode _____

Email _____

- I would like to go on the Crossways Mailing List and receive the twice-yearly newsletter.
- I would like to receive periodic updates for prayer.
- I am interested in helping out by:

Yes, I will support Crossways Community & enclose my cheque for:

£ _____

Please indicate whether you wish your cheque to go towards the:

- General Fund
- Mental Health Awareness
- Crossways Enterprises
- The Kitchen Table

Please contact us on 01892 543290 if you would like to make a regular gift and receive a Standing Order form.

Gift Aid

If you are a UK taxpayer, you can make your donation even more generous by completing the Declaration below. You must pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax at least equal to the tax that the Crossways Community reclaims on your donations in the appropriate tax year. (currently 25p for each £1 you give).

Signed _____ Date _____

Privacy: As a supporter of Crossways Community we hold your contact details. Any information you give us will be used for Crossways Community purposes only. We never pass on contact details to any other organisation. If you do not wish to receive further information or news from us please contact us julia.kirk@crosswayscommunity.org.uk or via the contact details on the front page.

Pre-lockdown GALLERY

Crossways was awarded the Charity of the Year award 2019 at the Tunbridge Wells Love Where we Live Awards.



Janine, Chris and Eris

We held a party for all the staff to celebrate the merger of the two charities.



To celebrate the official opening of their new store, Dulux Decorator Centre Tunbridge Wells, Dulux donated £500 worth of products to Crossways Community. Chris is pictured at the opening with Store Manager, Derek MacArthur and the famous Dulux dog. Donations of this nature are very much appreciated as we always have the need for paints for our all our homes within Crossways. We can also put the paints to use at Enterprises, our furniture up-cycling project.



CROSSWAYS ACCOMMODATION:

- **Moxham House:** a registered care home providing round-the-clock support for 17 residents.
 - **71 London Road:** a registered care home providing round-the-clock care for 7 residents, plus a further 2 in a self-contained annexe.
 - **62 London Road:** a supported unit for 3 people.
 - **Culverdale:** a supported unit for 22 people.
 - **Bethel Court:** 6 self-contained flats for more independent tenants.
 - **Camden Road:** 5 studio flats for more independent tenants.
- CROSSWAYS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS:** Running awareness programmes in schools, businesses, churches and community groups.
- CROSSWAYS COMMUNITY ENTERPRISES:** Practical work experience, helping combat the exclusion of people with mental health difficulties.
- THE KITCHEN TABLE:** Our community Café in Camden Road, open to all.